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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/814,654	03/31/2004	Shuji Tanaka	9319S-000711	5899

27572 7590 06/15/2006

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EXAMINER

TOLEDO, FERNANDO L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2823

DATE MAILED: 06/15/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/814,654

Applicant(s)

TANAKA ET AL.

Examiner

Fernando L. Toledo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 April 2006.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 20060321.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1 – 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Maydan et al. (U. S. Patent 5,855,681 A).

3. In re claims 1, 7 and 8; Maydan, in the U. S. Patent 5,855,681 A; figures 1 – 29 and related text discloses several process modules for performing several process; and an inter-process carrying means 109 for carrying a container between the process modules, the container being capable of storing several intermediate products therein; wherein each process module includes: an intra-process carrying means 102/112 for removing the intermediate products from the container and carrying the intermediate products within each process module in a single product state; and several of processing means 106 for performing the several processes, respectively, within each process module, and wherein the several of processing means are arranged along the intraprocess carrying means in a carrying direction of the intermediate products, without arranging several of processing means for performing the same kinds of processes on the intermediate products in a group (Figure 4).

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4. In re claim 2, Maydan discloses further including transfer means provided between the inter-process carrying means and the intra-process carrying means and having a buffering function of temporarily storing the intermediate products to be transferred therein (Figure 8).

5. In re claim 3, Maydan discloses wherein the inter-process carrying means is adapted to carry a container before the maximum number of intermediate products capable of being stored in the container is reached, and the intra-process carrying means selects the several of intermediate products to be processed in the same next process module, stores the selected intermediate products in the container in a group, and transfers the container to the inter-process carrying means (Figure 4).

6. In re claim 4, 5 and 6, Maydan discloses wherein the intermediate products include plate-shaped members, semiconductor wafers and liquid crystal display devices (Columns 7 and 8).

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed 10 April 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive for the following reasons.

8. Applicant contests that Maydan discloses the multiple process regions are not for performing a plurality of process within a process module as recited in claim 1.

Examiner respectfully submits that Maydan teaches such limitation, particularly in the abstract where it is disclose that: "[t]he processing regions also preferably include separate gas distribution assemblies and RF power sources to provide a uniform plasma density over a wafer surface in each processing region. The processing chambers are configured to allow multiple, isolated processes to be performed concurrently in at least two processing regions so that at

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least two wafers can be processed simultaneously in a chamber with a high degree of process control provided by shared gas sources, shared exhaust systems, separate gas distribution assemblies, separate RF power sources, and separate temperature control systems.” Hence Maydan discloses the invention as claimed.

Conclusion

9. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

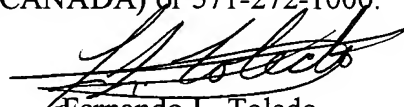
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Fernando L. Toledo whose telephone number is 571-272-1867. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 12pm-7:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, Matthew Smith can be reached on 571-272-1907. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Fernando L. Toledo
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2823

flt

10 June 2006